In India.

(i) Construction of new rail link between Jiribam-Imphal-Moreh at a cost of Rs. 2941.08 crore.

In Myanmar:

(ii) Construction of a new rail link between Tamu (Moreh)-Kalay-Segyi at a cost of Rs. 1339.02 crore and rehabilitation of existing line from Segyi-Chaungu Mohaung at a cost of Rs. 283.959 crore.

(c) The Jiribam-Imphal (Tupui) sector is scheduled to be completed by March 2010. No decision has been taken with regard to construction/ rehabilitation on the other sectors.

(d) and (e) The security situation in the border areas is under constant review.

Use of chemical weapons by Pakistan

1033. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports of the alleged use of chemical weapons by Pakistani forces in Balochistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government propose to take to counter any such use of dangerous chemical weapons against our country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) It has been reported in the Pakistani media that Pakistani forces used chemical weapons in Balochistan recently.

On 24 December 2005, Senator Sanaullah Baloch of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) alleged that the army was using gas and chemicals against Balochs. On 24 December 2005, Senators belonging to the nationalist parties of Balochistan accused the military of using poison gas in Kohlu, Balochistan, and of carpet bombing civilians in the area. On 7 February 2006, Mr. Agha Shahid Hasan Bugti, Secretary-General of Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP), accused the paramilitary forces of firing chemical gas shells on civilian population in Dera Bugti, Balochistan.

However, on 2 January 2006, the Spokesman of the Pakistan Army, Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, rejected the reports that Pakistan security forces had used poisonous gas in operations in Balochistan.

(c) Government remains fully vigilant and will take all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and national interests.

Regional passport office at Kohima

1034. SHRI T. R. ZELIANG: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to set up a Regional Passport Office at Kohima;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No Sir.

(b) Not applicable;

(c) It has not been possible to open a new Passport office in Kohima due to a variety of reasons including lack of requisite volume of demand for passport warranting opening of a new passport office and also due to manpower constraints.

Arrest of Fisherman

1035. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was any agreement, settlement or understanding for not arresting of Indian fisherman (especially from Gujarat) by Pakistan and *vice-versa*;

(b) whether in spite of that Pakistan is repeatedly arresting the Indian fishermen and their vessels and property;

(c) the number of Indian fishermen in Pakistan jails; and

(d) whether Government propose to arrise on any agreement on the lines of agreement with Sri Lanka on this issue?